

HUMANITIES SEMINARS PROGRAM, Spring 2022
ANCIENT GREEK MYTHOLOGY

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WELCOME to an exciting exploration of the ever fascinating Ancient Greek Mythology! The aim is to appreciate the scintillating diversity of the mythic tales about gods and mortals. While the mythic events and characters may initially appear daunting, they actually fall into a coherent order that begins with creation tales and stories about the gods, and then proceeds to hero tales and human circumstances. Not just entertaining, the stories offer insights into ancient Greek ideas on profound human issues, which in turn illuminate our contemporary values and beliefs.

Text: Barry Powell, *Classical Myth*. Pearson. 8th ed. ordered; any edition acceptable.
Additional brief readings will be uploaded to HSP's password-protected Learning Portal online.

Ch. 2, The Cultural Context offers valuable background.

Key Names & Terms and **Further Readings** are at the end of each chapter.

Maps are inside front & back covers and throughout; see Maps list.

Reference Charts—Chronology and Greek & Roman Pantheons—follow text, pp. 713-15

Syllabus: Read **Topics** for date listed; (Topics in parentheses are optional).

“**Perspective**” insets may be skipped, but they and “**Observations**” can be insightful.

Page numbers may differ by edition. **Note:** b = bottom, m = mid, t = top.

Feb. 1 **Introduction** to the course:

Ch. 1, **Nature of Myth: What is Myth? Types of Myth—Divine, Legend, Folktale** 2-3, 6-12t

Ch. 3, **Influence of Near Eastern Myth—Sumerian, Semitic, Other**, 59-67

Greek Myths—Archaic, Classical, Hellenistic; Roman Appropriation, 67-78

Feb. 8 **Myths of Creation**

Ch. 4: **Greek Gods: Hesiod, Theogony: Children of Chaos & Gaea—Titans, Oceanus**, 82-85

Cronus, Uranus, Aphrodite, 88-89; **Zeus' Battles w/ Titans, w/ Giants**, 94-95, 100-101

Rdgs: “**Homeric Hymn to Gaia**”; **Zeus' matings**, from the *Theogony*

Eastern Creation Tales: “Enuma Elish”; **Perspective 4.2—Genesis 1**, 104m-109m; 112-113t

Ch. 5: **Creation of Mortals: Prometheus, Maker and Protector of Mortals, Pandora**, 115-18, 120b-25; (**Five Races**, 131-34m; **Lycaon, Deucalion, Pyrrha**, 136b-141t)

Feb. 15 **Female Deities—Sexuality, Growth, Fertility:** Ch. 9, **Intro, Aphrodite**, 211-14 [may skip Venus in art]; **Aphrodite & Anchises**, 218-24t; **& Adonis**, 265m-66

(**Hera, Queen of Heaven**, 156-7; **Artemis, Athena**, 224-34)

Ch. 10, **Demeter, Persephone, Eleusinian Mysteries**, 236-45, 248-54

Inanna, Dumuzi, Sacred Marriage, 255-58; **Hera**, 148b-150; **Cybele, Attis**, 262-5

Feb. 22 **Male Deities: From Elemental Power to Institutional Authority:**

Fertility: Ch. 11, **Dionysos—Birth, Youth, Wanderings, in Thebes, Myths, Cult, Theater**, 271-7, 280-97, 300-301t

Myths of Death: Ch. 12, **the Underworld, Greek View**, 303-6

Orpheus, Eurydice, Orphism, 318m-23

Ch. 6, **Zeus**, 144-148; (**Poseidon, Hades**, 160-3)

- Mar. 1 **Younger Gods: Ch. 7, Apollo: Prophecy, Delos, Delphi, Delphic Oracle, Loves, 167-80**
Ch. 8, **Hermes, Pan, 187-201; (Hephaestus, Ares, 203-9)**
- Mar. 8 **Spring Break—No Class**
- Mar. 15 **Heroic Myth: Ch 13, Intro, 336-8t; Culture Heroes:**
Ch. 15, **Heracles: Birth through Labors, 375-400** (may read selectively; may skip side-deeds);
Death of Heracles, 404b-19
Ch. 16, **Theseus: Begetting, Labors, Athens, Antiope, Amazons, 428m-36t; Death, Myth-Propaganda, 445-47; & Amphitrité, & Minotaur, Ariadne, 456m-61m**
(Ch. 17, **Myths of Crete: Europa, Minos, Pasiphaë, Daedalus, Icarus, 449-55, 461m-465**)
- Mar. 22 Ch. 14, **Perseus, 359m-73**
Ch. 18, **Oedipus, 483b-89; (7 ag. Thebes, Colonus, Battle, Antigone, 491-500)**
Ch. 19, **Jason: Pelias, the Argo, Medea, 505m-15; (Pelias' Death, Corinth, 518m-30t)**
- Mar. 29 Ch. 20, **The Trojan War: House of Atreus, House of Tyndareus, Peleus & Thetis, Judgment of Paris, The Trojan War: Achilles, Hector, Andromache, 539-74**
- Apr. 5 Ch. 21, **Fall of Troy & Aftermath: the Greeks, the Horse, its Fall; A Trojan War?; Agamemnon's Return, Murder, Orestes' Revenge, Trial, A Parable of Progress? 576-97**
Ch. 22, **Odysseus, 601-29**
- Apr. 12 Ch. 23, **Trojan Refugee Aeneas & Founding of Rome: Early Rome, Roman Religion, Legend of Aeneas, 631-52**
Concluding discussion